

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at Pinetrees Community Centre, The Circle, Pinehurst, SN2 1QR
on Tuesday 7th December 2021 at 7.00pm.

Present Cllr Steph Exell
Cllr Mick Lucas
Cllr John Ballman
Cllr Paul Exell
Cllr Dave Patey (Vice Chair)
Cllr James Yeowell

Cllr Ian Edwards (Via Zoom) Left after AG8.

Officers Andy Reeves- Clerk
Andrew Briggs (Estates Manager – via zoom)
Jodie Smart (Head of Finance & Governance)

Public None

FGP075

Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr P Baker & Cllr R Ballman.

FGP076

Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

Cllr J Ballman declared an interest as Member of HBUF and the RSPB.

Cllr P Exell & Cllr S Exell Declared an interest in being members of the Central Swindon North Leisure & Library Trust (CSNL<).

FGP077

Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Finance & General Purpose Meetings held on 2nd November 2021 and 30th November 2021.

FGP078

Transaction Logs

Cllr P Exell confirmed the October 2021 GPC Logs had been audited pending one minor query for parking.

Cllr P Exell also confirmed that Barclays had refunded £178.00 to the Council from an external fraudulent transaction which took place in September 2021.

FGP079

Budget Report

Councillors **NOTED** the report.

FGP080

Payment List

Councillors **NOTED** the list.

Cllr S Exell raised a request for clarity on a spend for £4,176.79 on HFG GPC Card. The Clerk advised it may be the *pass-through* pension cost. The cost related to a grant funded pizza oven for the Pinetrees Community Centre.

FGP081

Grant Requests

The Clerk presented a summary of the request. The Clerk requested to repurpose £500 from the Pinehurst *CircleFest* grant to be used for bicycle marking event later in 2022, as *CircleFest* was unable to proceed due to Covid19 concerns.

Cllr S Exell was concerned that the grant was being repurposed mid-year. The Clerk responded that the event couldn't go ahead because of last minute covid concerns and in all other cases grant funding has been used for its intent.

The Clerk assured Councillors was an isolated Covid19 repurpose rather than something that will happen frequently.

RESOLVED: To repurpose a previously approved £500 spend to support bicycle remarking in partnership with Emily Van De Ley of CrimeStoppers England.

FGP082

Ward Allowance Update

Cllr S Exell asked if members could be reminded of their remaining ward allowance balance. The Clerk advised that the Finance Admin Assistant circulate as soon as possible.

The Clerk presented a request of £4,996 on behalf of Cllr Raj Patel for a replacement bus shelter on Vicarage Road. The shelter had been damaged by a passing vehicle around October 2021 and a photograph was shown to Councillors.

Cllr P Exell suggested that as this was a motor vehicle should this not instead be covered by the central insurance pool which covers 'insurable' costs below our insurance excess.

Cllr D Patey & Cllr M Lucas advised they would prefer us to pursue the driver of the vehicle which struck the bus shelter. The Clerk advised he would seek information from the Police & SBC.

RESOLVED to instruct the Clerk to contact 101 and SBC to obtain the URN on any potential car driver collision report. If this is not available, then funding should be taken from the insurance reserve for £4,996 by way of email to the Chair of FGP first.

Verbal requests were tabled on behalf of Cllr Ian Edwards and Cllr D Patey.

Cllr S Exell raised a point of order in that whilst sympathetic to the need to use ward allowance by year end, it is custom to have reports presented in advance, not for requests to be added without note, report or estimate quote.

The Chair agreed and declined to hear any further ward allowance requests until written quotes could be provided in advance. The Chair advised further requests can be made at Full Council on 15th December 2021 with the Chairs approval.

FGP083

Earmarked Reserves Update

Councillors **NOTED** the report.

FGP084

Virement

The Clerk advised that the proposal to make a virement request from a corporate budget code to a committee budget code should only be made with the consent of Full Council and this should be brought to the attention of Council either in December 2021 or January 2022.

Cllr S Exell noted there is a year end underspend and asked that this be considered as part of the this item.

Councillors **NOTED** the recommendation and would consider the year end underspend during projection review in AG13.

FGP085

Current Year Projection Review

The Clerk presented the report and highlighted the variance lines along with aligned projections of over and under spend as well as mid-year grant funding unbudgeted. The net result was an underspend of around £45,000.

Cllr J Yeowell noted an underspend on the Dementia Café and wanted to ensure this line would not be reduced.

Councillors **NOTED** the report.

RESOLVED: In lieu of a replacement bin virement to approach Ward Councillors to utilise remaining Ward Allowances first. We must include new bins and twelve bins which requiring replacement. That the Head of Finance & Governance asks Councillors ahead of the next Full Council. If Ward Councillors are not willing to use ward allowances to review an appropriate corporate cost.

FGP086

Public Works Loan

The interim Chair of FGP presented the report outlining the recommendation from the Chair of FGP Cllr Kevin Small.

Councillors were generally responsive of the preferential interest rates afforded as part of the borrowing but wished to see greater clarity through the MMP provisions to ensure money was being aligned in terms of priority.

Cllr J Ballman felt reluctant to provide a recommendation until the full MMP detail had been disseminated to Councillors after they had an opportunity to review the progress at Full Council on 15th December 2021.

Councillors agreed that borrowing the dilapidation funds appeared to be a more cost effective method provided the detail on the spend was clearer.

RESOLVED: Agree a recommendation in principle on the PWLB option as a preferred form of spend, pending further detail on the MMP analysis and phased spend.

FGP087

Budget Setting 2022/23

In addition to the dilapidation and service costs, Councillors discussed the level of financial support is provided for different facets of delivery including pitches, community work, allotments and community centres and how this can be refined.

The Chair of FGP urged Councillors to be content with providing financial support to work that the council undertakes but to ensure that where support or 'subsidies' do exist that they are consistent and fair.

The Chair of FGP summarised the financial options report of doing nothing, doing just enough or doing all that is required.

RESOLVED: To present all options including the PWLB option (4) to Full Council without a Committee recommendation.

FGP088

Exclusion of Press and Public

To RESOLVE that in accordance with the provision of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items on the basis of **Staffing Matters**.

Staffing Panel

The Clerk presented the proposal from the HFG on a full staffing Job Description and Salary review.

Given the speed and piecemeal nature of the Councils swift creation and development aligned with devolved services, Councillors broadly welcomed the opportunity for an external review to our staffing structure as the Council 'settles'.

The Clerk however felt that the timing of such a review at budget setting, a critical point in the Moredon Sports Hub and the distorted employment market post covid whether this is the right point in which to do a benchmarked review.

The Clerk also reminded Councillors that Council must be content of any remuneration impacts that may take place can be considered, not least financial liabilities for employees identified as benchmarked above, but the psychological & financial impact to employees of where over benchmarking occurs.

RESOLVED: To proceed with a Staffing Review to commence in September 2022 in line with the next round of budget arrangements. The Clerk to establish a working group around April/May 2022.

The meeting closed at 9.33pm

Signed.....

Date.....Chair of the Committee